

CHAOS!
COMICS

Cryptic Writings of

MEGADETH®

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CANADA



JUSTINIANO

Young

Cryptic Writings of **MEGADETH**[®]

Skull Beneath The Skin

based on the song and lyrics by **Dave Mustaine**

written by **Brian Pulido**

illustrated by **Justiniano**

Rattlehead

based on the song and lyrics by **Dave Mustaine**

written by **Mike Flippin**

illustrated by **Robert E. Brown**

Looking Down The Cross

based on the song and lyrics by **Dave Mustaine**

written by **Roy Young**

pencilled by **David Brewer**

inked by **Livesay**

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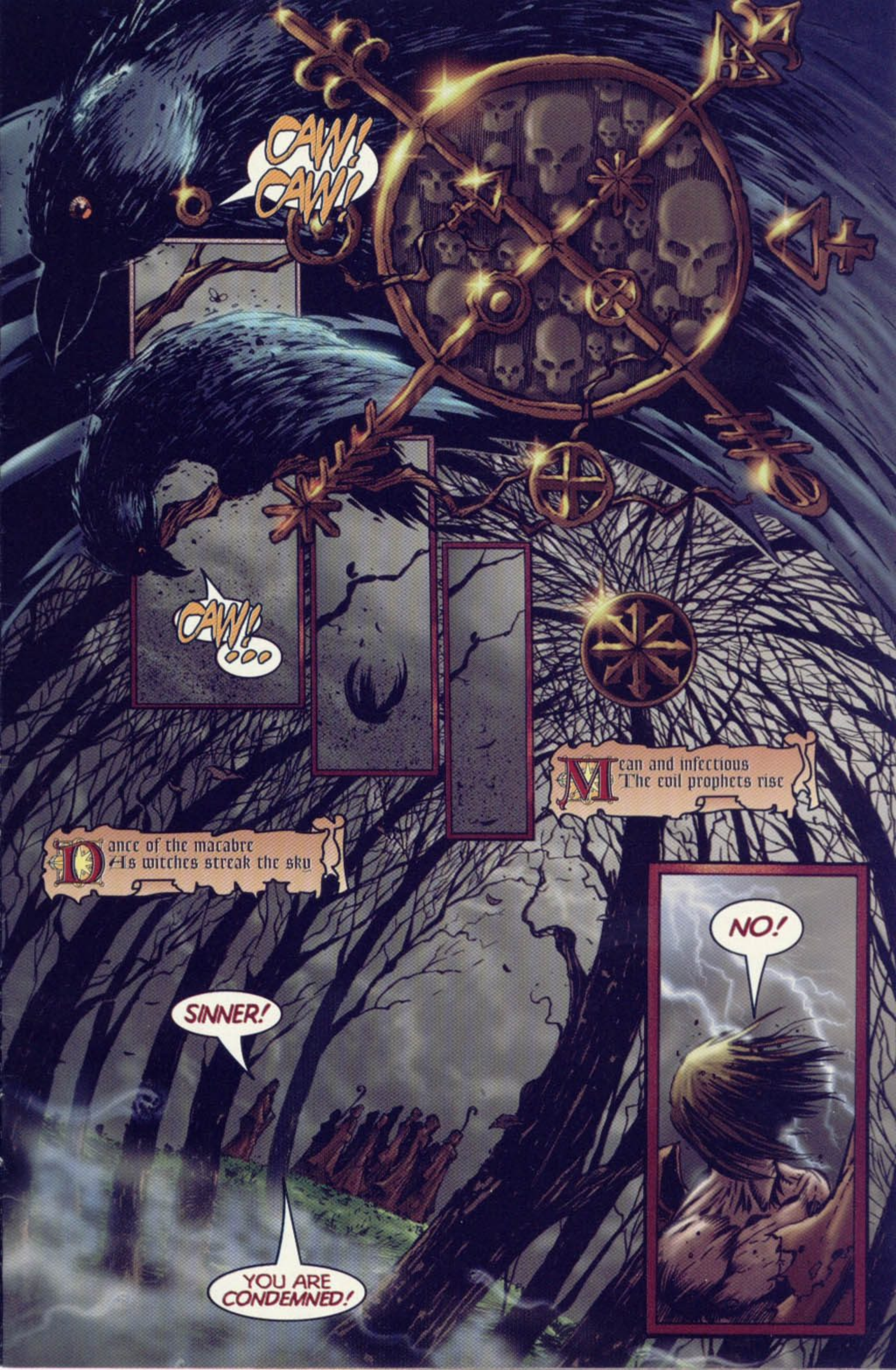
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CAW!
CAW!

CAW!

Mean and infectious
The evil prophets rise

Dance of the macabre
As witches streak the sky

SINNER!

YOU ARE
CONDEMNED!

NO!

Decadent worship
of Black magic,
sorcery

BEGONE
SINNERS,
BEGONE!

DELIVER
US FROM THIS
LIFE!

PLEASE!

ANOTHER
SOUL...
DAMNED.

NO,
NOT HERE.
ANYWHERE
BUT HERE!

In the womb
of the devil's
dungeon...

PRAISE
THE DARK!

KNEEL!

EMBRACE
THE BLACK!

...trapped
without a
plea



Seeething in agony
Decrosis is the fate



LIGH...

Pins sticking through the skin
The Venom now sedates

SS-STOP!

RRRR --

WE
CAN'T.

WE
WON'T!

Locked in a pillory
Nowhere to be found
Screaming for your life
No one hears a sound

FSSS

FSHA

YOU
CALLED FOR
HELP?

YOU
CALLED FOR
ME?!

HELP
ME...

AAAAA

PREPARE
THE PATIENT'S
SCALP!

TO PEEL
AWAY!

METAL
CAPS HIS
EARS.

HE'LL
HEAR NOT
WHAT WE
SAY.

KRANG

SOLID
STEEL
VISOR.
RIVETED
'CROSS HIS
EYES.

IRON
STAPLES
CLOSE HIS
JAWS.

SO
NO ONE
HEARS HIS
CRIES.

AAAA

AAAAAA

MURGH!

HA HA!

KINK



SIPHON
HIM!

SIPHON
HIS LIFE
AWAY!

Now you're drawn and quartered
Your bones will make the X
Symbol stands for poison
And it's chained to your head

...UGH...

...

GOOD.

NOW MY
REWARD!

THE SKULL
BENEATH THE
SKIN!

RIP

HAHAHAHA!

As we fold your arms
To make the holy cross
We cross the crucifix

WHAT
SAY YOU,
BOY?!

RELIGION
HAS BEEN
LOST!

PLEASE... ..NO...

FORGIVE
ME FATHER...



NOOOO

NOOOO



AAAAA

AAARRGH

EEIGH



The skull beneath the skin.

The skull beneath the skin!

The skull beneath the skin!

The beginning...



THANKS FOR THE RIDE MAN!

NO PROBLEM, KID. HAVE A GOOD TIME.

SUBJECT IS IN PLACE.

TONIGHT IS THE NIGHT...

Stand up and plant your feet. Listen, I'm letting off steam. Now throw your hands in the air. Let loose, I don't f#\$%\$n' care

YEA!
THIS IS IT, TURN HERE!

HOPE THE PITS RAGIN'.

Oh YEAH! LOOK AT IT GO.

HERE I COME!

Rattlehead.

A dose of metal you need. To bang your head till you bleed.

YEAHAAA!

It's time for snapping some neck, slashing, thrashing to **megadeth**.

THE PIT'S
TOUGH
TONIGHT.

FEEL
THE URGE
TO PLAY
ROUGH!

FWHAM
OUTTA
MY WAY!

DAMN,
THAT FELT
GOOD!

KRACK

ARRRGH!

GONNA
KICK SOME
ASS TONIGHT...
GOTTA STAY
ON TOP!

Rattlehead.

PRIMITIVE ANGER
RAGES. AND
REALITY SLIPS
AWAY.

RAAAAA!

KRUNPH

KILL
TO
EAT!

EAT!

SURVIVE!

You, your head... is pounding with pain.
You shake loose... parts of your brain.

EAT TO
SURVIVE!

GOTTA
SURVIVE!

EAT TO
SURVIVE!

FEEL

DESTRUCTIVE!

FEEL
LIKE I
GOTTA
SURVIVE...
SURVIVE?

INTENSE...
HEAD IS
POUNDING
WITH PAIN!

POUNDING
WITH **RAGE**...
THIS IS
INSANE!

FEEL
OUTTA
CONTROL! LIKE
SOMEONE'S IN
THE SHADOWS,
IN MY HEAD,
PUSHING ME TO
SURVIVE!

FEEL

POWERFUL!

YEA!

CAN'T
CROSS HIM,
CAN'T SHAKE HIM.
FEEL LIKE AN
ANIMAL...
SAVAGE!

Winning, sinning, beginning,
feeding, the needing for bleeding.

I HAVE
THE
POWER!

HE IS
CRAZED. IT
IS THE
SICKNESS!

THE
POWER
TO
KILL!

SHAKE

POWER
TO
KILL!

KILL TO
SURVIVE!

BANG
YOUR
HEAD 'TILL
YOU
BLEED!

RAGE.
INTENSE.
CAN'T
CONTROL
IT.

FW
SH

Bashing,
smashing,
crashing.

IE
ruing,
annihilating
you!

BANG
YOUR
HEAD...!

UGH!

DOWN
YA GO,
PAL.

LET THE
KILLING
BEGIN!

IT'S
TIME FOR
SNAPPING
SOME
NECK!

WHAT
THE?

STAMM

... 'TIL
YOU...

... BLEED

YOU
AND WHAT
ARMY,
GEEK!

WE
TH
CK

There's someone back in the shadows. You feel though you can't see his eyes.

I've'll bash your head if you cross him. Ain't quite your average guy.

... and business is good!

Survive at all costs!

THANK SH

Survival of the strongest... I am the strongest...!

I am un-defeatable!

Killing is my business...

KA-CHUN

GOTTA! **STAY... ON... TOP!**

KRACK

BAR

I GOT HIS HEAD... GRAB HIS ARMS... HURRY!

NO!... THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND!

A DOSE OF **METAL** YOU NEED!

SPLOORCH

HOLLY \$%#&! THAT KIDS KILLING PEOPLE!

DAMN!... HE'S F%&\$'N CRAZY!

GOT 'EM... THAT'S ENOUGH!

GOTTA SURVIVE... THIS IS WAR! MUST WIN TO SURVIVE, MUST

DESTROY!

RAAAA!

**MUST
SURVIVE!
AGAINST
ALL ODDS.
MUST RISE,
CONQUER!**

RATTATTATTAT

RATTATTATTAT

Don't wear no leather to fit in.
Don't wear no spikes to be cool.

KABOOM

SURVIVE!

**AT
ALL
COSTS!**

**MUST
ANNIHILATE
EVERYTHING..!**

DESTROY!

UGH!

SURVIVE!

**WHAT'S
HAPPENING
TO ME!?**

**CAN'T
CONTROL
THE
RAGE!**

AARRGGH!

Don't want no woman beside him.
Just make it fast, loud and rude.

**EXTREME
ANGER!
EXTREME
RAGE!**

**WHAT
IS THIS?
CAN'T CONTROL
ANYTHING. CAN'T
STOP IT!... THE
PAIN!**

KACHING

RRIP

Rattlehead.

MUTUALLY
ASSURED
DESTRUCTION.

GUARANTEED!

BOOM

GGRUMMBLEE

HA HA HA
HA

KABLAM

CH
KOOM

AAAAA!

EIIAAA!

GRRRAA!

MAN,
WHAT
HAVE I
DONE.

PEACE
THROUGH
ANNIHILATION.

Huh?

OVER
THERE! ON
TOP OF THE
BODIES!

FREEZE!

GOT
THE PLACE
SECURED. WE'RE
BRINGING
ONE KID
IN.

ASIDE
FROM THE
WOUNDED, HE'S
THE ONLY ONE
IN HERE
ALIVE!

EASY
DOES IT,
KID!

CHANNEL
5 NEWS
REPORTING *LIVE*
AT THE SCENE.
CAN YOU TELL US
WHAT HAPPENED?
WHAT DID
YOU SEE?



RATTLE
YOUR GOD
DAMN
HEAD!

SO WHAT
ARE YA SAYIN'
HERE. YOU TELLIN'
ME IT WAS THIS *KID*?
LOOK AT HIM! HE'S
NOTHIN' BUT A
SCRAWNY
PUNK!

BUT
SARGE, EVERY-
ONE ELSE IS
EITHER *DEAD*
OR AT THE
HOSPITAL!

S.I. 1...
THANKS FOR
BABY SITTING.
WE'LL TAKE
THE KID FROM
HERE.

THIS IS MY
JURISDICTION!

YOU'RE
COMING
WITH US
KID.

DO
YOURSELF A
FAVOR, SERGEANT...
*FORGET ABOUT
IT!*

WELL, I
GUESS
CONGRATULATIONS
ARE IN ORDER
TO YOU AND YOUR
TEAM. THE *TEST*
WAS *QUITE*
SUCCESSFUL.

BIO- MECHANICAL WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT

Oh, YES,
SIR, Mr. PRESIDENT...
SUCCESSFUL INDEED! AS
YOU CAN SEE FROM THE
DIAGRAM, IT'S EVERY-
THING WE HAD HOPED
FOR... AND
MORE!

IMAGINE, SIR, WHAT WE COULD DO IN MOSCOW,
TOKYO, OR ANY COUNTRY THAT POSED A THREAT TO US.

IT'S UNDETECTABLE BY ANYONE... INCLUDING
THE HOST... BOTH BEFORE & AFTER THE ATTACK,
AND THE HOST WON'T REMEMBER THE "ATTACK".
UNDETECTABLE WHOLESAL DESTRUCTION
AT IT'S FINEST, SIR.

...AT A DOWN
TOWN ROCK
CLUB IN A
MYSTERIOUS
CATASTROPHE...

...ALTHOUGH
SOME
SURVIVORS SAY IT
WAS A SORT OF HALF
MAN/HALF MACHINE,
OFFICIALS TELL US THAT
ALL THE WITNESSES
HAD HIGH ALCOHOL AND/
OR DRUG LEVELS AND
THEIR TESTIMONIES
ARE BEING
DISMISSED...

...82
DEAD AND
14 SERIOUSLY
INJURED LAST
NIGHT IN A
VIOLENT OUT-
BREAK...

VERY GOOD.
I'LL ALLOCATE
SUBSTANTIAL
TAX DOLLARS
TO THIS
IMMEDIATELY.

I'M A
RATTLEHEAD.

RATTLE
YOUR GOD
DAMN
HEAD!

THE ROMAN LIEUTENANT HAS INFORMED GOVERNOR PILATE OF THIS MAN'S CRIMES. NONE OF WHICH WOULD WARRANT THE USE OF SHACKLES AND CHAINS.

BUT UPON THE EARS OF THE MASSES THIS DAY, INNOCENT IS NOT HEARD... ONLY THE SOUND OF SIN AND THE LAUGHTER OF FALLEN ANGELS BLOWING BY ON THE WIND.

CRUCIFY HIM!

KILL HIM!

NOW BEFORE THEY TAKE ME
AND MY BLESSED LIFE
NOW YOU'LL KNOW WHY DEATH
WAS SUMMONED HERE TONIGHT
I'LL RECALL MY PERILS
THEY'LL KILL ME IN PRIDE
NO, I CAN'T RUN AWAY
THERE'S NO PLACE TO HIDE

THOUGH TOO MUCH TO LIVE FOR
I OWE ENOUGH TO DIE

IF HE
LIVES, WHAT
WILL BECOME
OF US?

DO NOT
WORRY. WE
WILL NOT ALLOW
HIM TO MAKE FOOLS
OF US. SON OF
GOD? HOW
DARE HE?

**CRUCIFY
HIM!**

WHAT
WRONG HAS
HE DONE?!

**CRUCIFY
HIM! CRUCIFY THE
BLASPHEMER!**

VERY
WELL...

I DO NOT
WISH TO BE
PART OF THIS.
HE IS -- JUST
A MAN.

I WASH
MY HANDS
OF THIS!

I AM
INNOCENT OF
THIS GOOD MAN'S
BLOOD!

THE
RESPONSIBILITY
LIES WITH
YOU!

ASK NOT FOR SALVATION
MY DEATH SHALL MEAN THEIR LIVES

HIS
BLOOD BE ON
US AND ON OUR
CHILDREN!

WE
ACCEPT!
CRUCIFY
HIM!

CRU-CI-FY!
CRU-CI-FY!
CRU-CI-FY!

AND BACK AT
THE DARKENED
TEMPLE...

WELL..?
WHAT NEWS
HAVE YOU
BROUGHT OF THE
HERETIC?

IT IS
DONE THE
BLASPHEMER
FROM NAZARETH
IS TO BE
CRUCIFIED!

HEH
HEH...

I BRING
NEWS...

HATRED AND GUILT, THE ALTAR THEY'VE BUILT
HIGH PRIESTS OF SIN

THIS CALLS
FOR A CELEBRATION!
IT IS NOT EVERY DAY
ONE CONDEMNS THE
KING OF KINGS!
HA HA HAH!

DESTINY, FATE THE WICKED ONES GATE
BECKONING YOU IN



WHAT
IS A KING
WITHOUT A
CROWN?



AND THE CRACK OF THE
WHIP SIGNALLED THAT THE
PARADE HAD BEGUN.

TO FILL THE HEARTS
WHERE NO LIGHT
BURNS, SO FEW.



HE LOOKS IN THEIR SOULS AND
SEES THE SIN AND CORRUPTION
IN THE PEOPLE BEFORE HIM. SO
MANY LISTEN... SO FEW HEAR...

DOWN THE WALKWAYS
THROUGH THE BLOOD STAINED TOWN



LOOKING DOWN THE CROSS
BLEEDING FROM THE CROWN



LED TO STAY

SWACK

TO DIE BESIDE THE THIEVES

SWACK

KILL THE KING
OF THE WORLD TO BE

AND NOW TO YOU, THIS WILL COME



DENOUNCE
HIM OR DIE!

A PUTRIFYING PESTILENCE
MORE NOXIOUS THAN THE SERPENTS BREATH
MALEVOLENTLY DESTINED

NEVER!

MORE CORRUPT THAN THE MALICE OF THE CHORONZON
MORE DISEASE THAN THE WIND
OF THE MOONLIGHT SUN

GLISH

PUTRIFACTION YOU HAVE CAUSED
NO NEED FOR CONFESSION



MY NAME HAS
BECOME DEATH...



NOW YOU WISH YOU HAD A GOD
TO STOP YOUR DEMOLITION

AND HOW THEY TURN MY
NAME INTO MURDEROUS
REASON. LIFE IS WHAT I
BRING, DEATH IS THE COST.

CRUSHING THE BONES OF THE HUNDREDFOLDS
SWINGING THE JUDGMENT HAMMER



THOSE WHO LIVE BY
THE SWORD SHALL
DIE BY THE SWORD.

MAN, WOMAN, CHILD NO-ONE IS SAFE
THE HEADS OF THE DEAD ARE THE BANNER

AND THIS WAS ALL YOU GOT
SO DON THESE BROKEN WINGS
SANDS OF TIME RUN OUT
BELLS OF HADES RING

IS THIS A NIGHTMARE
TO UNHALLOW THY NAME
SMELL OF BRIMSTONE
DANCING IN THE FLAMES

"WHY HAST THOU
FORSAKEN ME?"

NO HELP NOW
AS YOU FULFILL HIS TASK
CHIEF OF EVIL
HAS GOT YOU BY THE ASS





SET FREE
TO SIT UPON THE THRONE

JUST A DREAM?
YOUR WEeping ALL ALONE

LOOKING DOWN THE CROSS
SPEAK NO EVIL

I'M LOOKING DOWN THE CROSS
SPEAK NO EVIL

Lyrics

Written by Dave Mustaine

SKULL BENEATH THE SKIN

Mean and infectious
The evil prophets rise
Dance of the macabre
As witches streak the sky
Decadent worship of
Black magic sorcery
In the womb of the devil's dungeon
Trapped without a plea
See things in agony
Necrosis is the fate
Pins sticking through the skin
The venom now sedates
Locked in a pillory
Nowhere to be found
Screaming for your life
But no one hears a sound
Hellpp mmmmmmmmm
Prepare the patients scalp
To peel away
Metal caps his ears
He'll hear not what we say
Solid steel visor
Riveted cross his eyes
Iron staples close his jaws
So no one hears his cries
The skull beneath the skin
Now your drawn and quartered
Your bones will make the x
Symbol stands for poison
And it's chained to your head
And as we fold your arms
To make the holy cross
We cross the crucifix
Religion has been lost
The skull beneath the skin

RATTLEHEAD

Well, here I come
Stand up and plant your feet
Listen I'm letting off steam
Now throw your hands in the air
Let loose I don't fuckin' care
Rattlehead
A dose of metal you need
To bang your head 'till you bleed
It's time for snapping some neck
Slashing, thrashing to Megadeth
Rattlehead
You, your head, is pounding with pain
You shake loose, parts of your brain
Winning, sinning, beginning
Feeding, the needing for bleeding
Bashing, smashing, crashing
Frying, annihilating you!
There's someone back in the shadows
You feel though you can't see his eyes
He'll bash your head if you cross him
Ain't quite your average guy
Don't wear no leather to "fittin"
Don't wear no spike to be "cool"
Don't want no woman beside him
Just make it fast, loud and rude
Rattlehead
I'm a Rattlehead
Rattle your goddamn head!

LOOKING DOWN THE CROSS

Now before they take me
And my blessed life
Now you'll know why deth
Was summoned here tonight
I'll recall my perils
They'll kill me in pride
No, I can't run away
There's no place to hide
Though too much to live for
I owe enough to die
Ask not for salvation
My deth will mean their lives
Hatred and guilt the altar they've
built
High priests of sin
Destiny, fate the wicked ones gate
Beckoning you in
Down the walkways
Through the blood stained town
Looking down the cross
Bleeding from the crown
Led to stay
To die beside the thieves
Kill the king
Of the world to be
And now to you, this will come
A putrifying pestilence
More noxious than the serpents breath
Malevolently destined
More corrupt than the malice of the choronzon
More disease than the wind
Of the moonlight sun
Putrification you have caused
No need for confession
Now you wish you had a God
To stop your demolition
Crushing the bones of the hundred folds
Swinging the judgement hammer
Man, woman, child no-one is safe
The heads of the dead are the banner
And this was all you got
So don these broken wings
Sands of time run out
Bells of Hades ring
Is this a nightmare
To unhallow thy name
Smell the brimstone
Dancing in the flames
No help now
As you fulfill his task
Chief of evil
Has got you by the ass
Set free
To sit upon the throne
Just a dream?
Your weeping all alone
Looking down the cross (speak no evil)
I'm looking down the cross (speak no evil)

WORDS FROM

Dave Mustaine and Brian Pulido

Megadeth's Dave Mustaine is no stranger to the world of comics — "I used to read Iron Man and Spider-Man as a kid," he recalls, "and followed Punisher from the beginning. I also read Wolverine." — so the idea of doing a comic book based on his lyrics wasn't too hard to imagine.

What started as an informal meeting between Mustaine and Chaos! Comics' president and publisher Brian Pulido led quickly to an agreement. Chaos! would publish a quarterly comic book series, to be titled CRYPTIC WRITINGS OF MEGADETH, after the band's 1997 CD, "Cryptic Writings."

"This was a dream project for us from the very beginning," says Pulido. "There are quite a few Megadeth fans in our company, so this was a labor of love from the very

about," Mustaine says. "We went with Chaos! because they had a level of consistency and high quality, which is what we like to champion."

"I've given Brian free rein to write the story, because he's the expert with obviously top-notch influences. I've told him what the songs are about and he will take it from



"This was a dream project for us from the very beginning..."
Brian Pulido

beginning. We were glad to find out that Dave was in agreement with where Chaos! is and what we do."

"Chaos! Comics is very provocative and controversial, which to some degree is what Megadeth is all

there. The songs will take on a life of their own."

"Our specific purpose in adapting the songs is to remain absolutely faithful to Dave's lyrics," says Pulido.

"The readers come to see a visual interpretation of music that has meant anything from entertainment to revelation in their lives... and we refuse to sell out their expectations."

Mustaine adds that it was important to him to start with adaptations of songs from their first album, "Killing is My Business... And Business is Good," because the sto-

ries told there lay the foundation for what came later. Also, there was a certain Megadeth icon whose story was begging to be told first.

"It was important to set the tone about who Vic Rattlehead was," Mustaine says. "It's a visual interpretation of what the fans have had in their own minds for a long time. It's like peeling another layer of the Megadeth onion. I'm really looking forward to this kicking off."

"Writing Vic's story is an honor," Pulido says.

For Mustaine, the fusion of heavy metal music and visual storytelling seems like a natural union.

"There's a lot of songs that are very visual. If you listen to them, you can almost see what's happening...

"Chaos! Comics is very provocative and controversial, which to some degree is what Megadeth is all about..."

—Dave Mustaine

and with comics, when you read them, you can almost hear what's happening in the background. They can very much go hand in hand; it's a question of whether they complement one another. Comics embellish what we do.

"Part of what Megadeth is about is going into areas that most people are too intimidated to even touch. Truth is stranger than fiction, and comics/horror fiction has an affinity for touching on subjects that are borderline taboo. It's similar to what we're doing in that we try to write and sing about things that most people want to talk about, but just don't know how to—like

"Part of what Megadeth is about is going into areas that most people are too intimidated to even touch."

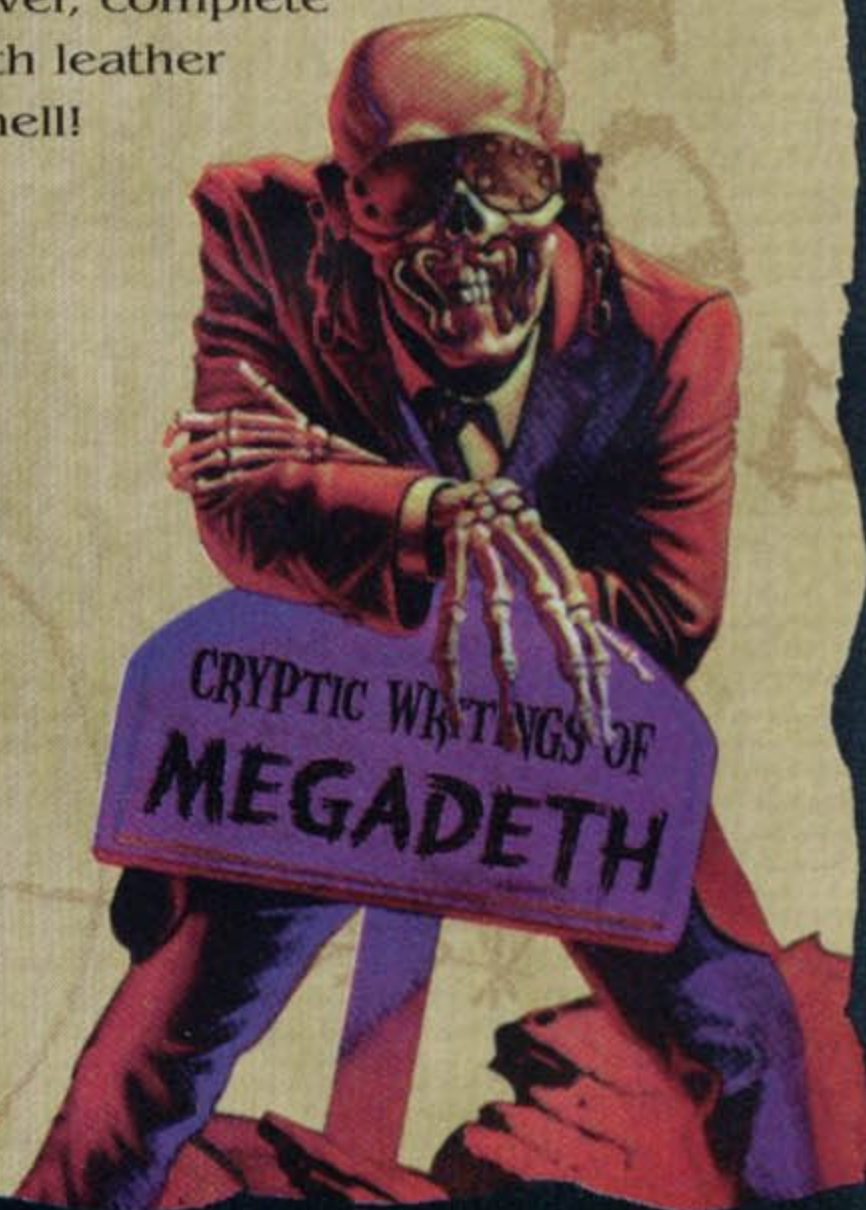
—Dave Mustaine

incest,

in 'Family Tree,'" he says.

"There are lots of things that happen in the world that are hard to face, hard to believe," Pulido adds. "Dave's work has such integrity that those things are brought out powerfully in his music. It is a rare pleasure to have this kind of collaboration with a partner whose work I admire so much."

Look for CRYPTIC WRITINGS OF MEGADETH #2, featuring adaptations of "The Chosen Ones," "Loved to Deth," and "Killing is My Business... And Business Is Good," coming in November from Chaos! Comics. Also be on the lookout for the official tour version of CRYPTIC WRITINGS OF MEGADETH #1—featuring an actual real leather cover, complete with leather smell!



Cryptic Writings of

MEGADETH® #2



Rock 'n' roll for the eyes! Featuring adaptations of: "Killing is My Business... and Business is Good", where an 18 year old assassin stalks international power brokers, "Loved to Death", and "The Chosen Ones". See DAVE MUSTAINE'S lyrics come to life in stories by BRIAN PULIDO and the MONTI BROTHERS. Artwork by ROBERT E. BROWN!

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So how did all this come about? How did the ever psychotic Chaos! Comics link up with the mighty Megadeth? All the credit is due to Chaos! Comics own office manager, Cheryl Monti.

Cheryl knows Megadeth manager Bud Prager and she suggested we all get together. We sent some of our comics down to Nashville while the band was recording Cryptic Writings and after they wrapped production we hooked up. It is very cool for me personally. Thanks Cheryl.

I started listening to Megadeth when "Peace Sells..." came out. I've been a hard-core listener for years and consider "Hook in Mouth" one of my all time favorite songs period. Plus long-time Chaos! readers know my

character, Evil Ernie is on a quest for "Megadeath", and that's not by mistake. It's a tip of the hat to Dave Mustaine. I happened to give "birth" to Evil Ernie in the late 80's while moshing in a pit at a Megadeth show.

Anyway, I hooked up with Dave and Bud at my favorite sushi bar in Arizona and pitched them my idea. I've always felt that other rock 'n' roll comics don't capture the essence of what the songs are about and biographies are boring, so my idea was to adapt the lyrics into stories (with Dave's blessing, of course). They dug it.

We've been very faithful to Dave's vision of these tunes, yet he's giving us room to swing. To be straight with you, it's like we're seeing stuff from a similar point of view, so this is not a stretch by any means.

Doing this comic is a dream come true for the Chaos! Crew. I'd particularly like to thank Bud Prager for his faith in us. And thanks to Dave Mustaine for putting his lyrical babies in our hands and trusting us. Thanks to the Capital Records crew for their support. And thanks to YOU for buying it.

If you like this comic, recommend it to a friend. If you're crazy about it, recommend it to huge groups of people. Thanks.

Sworn To The Black,



Brian Pulido
President, Chaos! Comics

DETHWATCH

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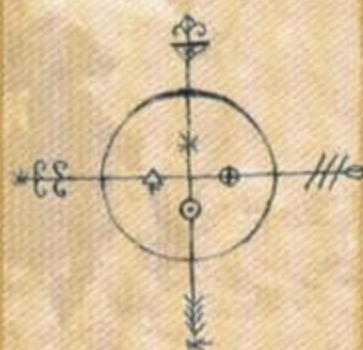
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